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Debate Reopens Historic U.S. Foreign Policy Issues

In his annual State of the Union message on January 8 President Truman took direct issue with the views of ex-President Herbert Hoover, former Ambassador Joseph P. Kennedy and Senator Robert A. Taft concerning the importance of Western Europe to the security of the United States. Declaring that Russia threatens world conquest, he said: "The state of our nation is in great part the state of our friends and allies throughout the world. The gun that points at them points at us also."

Senator Taft, in his extensive foreign policy speech of January 5, delivered on the eve of General Dwight D. Eisenhower's departure for Europe to survey the progress of rearmament of the North Atlantic pact countries, has meanwhile deepened the great debate launched by Hoover and Kennedy. Disclaiming isolationism and voicing support for the Atlantic pact, Mr. Taft concentrated his criticisms of the Administration on the character of American military preparations and on the degree of reliance the United States can or should place on the United Nations.

Taft's analysis of the situation confronting this country is based on two assumptions: that while there is the prospect of Communist infiltration in Western Europe, the U.S.S.R. will not deliver there a direct military attack; and that the greatest present danger to peace is the conduct of the Administration, specifically the expected formation of a European army under the command of General Eisenhower. Senator Taft therefore proposes that the United States build up its sea and air forces but that no ground forces be sent out of the country, either

to Asia or Europe, without the consent of Congress. He contends that President Truman "usurped" Congressional authority in sending troops to Korea last June.

While Senator Taft believes that the United States should continue to work with the United Nations, he argues that the President "incorrectly assumed that the United Nations was an operating organization with power to call on us for troops which we could supply. What Senator Taft did not point out was that the United Nations had not been so designed as to prevent aggression by a great power; and that this country, along with other UN members, did pledge itself, by the terms of the Charter, to provide armed forces for collective action under an agreement to be negotiated with the UN. His geographic perimeter of defense is broader than that of Mr. Hoover. "It seems to me," he said on January 5, "that our battle against communism is in fact a world-wide battle and must be fought on the world stage." He doubts, however, "if we should enter into any commitments in advance, or undertake the job at all unless we are sure it is well within our capacity, and almost certain of success."

Advance Commitments

Senator Taft's program, although it does not propose isolationism, reopens the issue that has overshadowed all foreign policy discussions in this country since 1918—whether the United States will "enter into any commitments in advance" of war. When this question was raised at the end of World War I, the Senate returned a negative answer by rejecting

the Covenant of the League of Nations. Today the situation is fundamentally different, for this country has accepted "commitments in advance" under the United Nations Charter and the North Atlantic pact, both of which were ratified by the Senate. The United States, consequently, is not in a position to play a lone hand again—unless, of course, it repudiates these two compacts. What can be argued about is not the obligation itself, but the nature and scope of its implementation.

As several commentators were prompt to point out, the Administration spokesmen, during the Senate debate on the Atlantic pact, specifically stated that the United States reserved the right to decide "the manner, the extent and the timing" of the aid it agreed to give in case of aggression; and General Eisenhower's principal task, in his current survey of the military prospects in Western Europe, is to define and implement these terms with respect to North-Atlantic defenses. Where the Administration is open to criticism—and such criticism had been made by others than Senator Taft long before he decided to comment on the subject—is that in its endeavor to win Congressional support for various programs of international cooperation it purposely avoided precise definitions of commitments that might arise out of treaty obligations. This piecemeal process of making foreign policy to fit emergencies as they arose, dictated by the hope of avoiding opposition, has now borne bitter fruit.

The effect of Senator Taft's speech, which in essence attempts to restore to the United States liberty of action in world affairs, has been to intensify a

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similar trend in Western European countries, which in different ways and for different reasons have been seeking to find a course of action that would leave them free to remain "neutral" in a possible conflict between the United States and the U.S.S.R. American "no-advance-commitments" sentiment and European "neutrality" have become so intertwined in their impact on each other that by now it is as difficult to determine which came first as it is to solve the chicken-and-egg riddle. Both points of view represent the same natural desire to avoid what seem supreme exertions and supreme sacrifices in a common cause, with the dim hope that somehow each nation, by standing alone, can avert being hit in case of another war. Both here and in Europe General Eisenhower's decision as to the feasibility of building defenses in Western Europe that could be reasonably expected to prevent aggression by Russia without draining the economies of the North Atlantic pact countries to the breaking point will crystallize policies which on both sides of the Atlantic are in a profound state of flux.

Should U.S. Negotiate?

Meanwhile, however, it would be wishful thinking to expect that events will stand still and that Russia will maintain the *status quo* while the Western world seeks to create "situations of strength." Washington takes a pessimistic view of the outcome of a Big Four conference in Europe, which according to the Russian note of December 30 would be devoted primarily—although not exclusively—to the German problem. The British and the French, however, do not want to leave any possibility of negotiations unexplored, and the Bonn government, con-

fronted with a critical decision about German rearmament, has been visibly shaken by the opposition of the Social Democrats and by their campaign for German unification, which could be achieved only by war or by negotiations with Russia.

On Asia, Washington, deeply affected by the attitudes of Hoover and Taft, has notified members of the United Nations that the organization is in danger of crumbling unless they brand Communist China an aggressor, impose economic sanctions on Peiping and break off whatever diplomatic relations they have with the Mao Tse-tung regime. This notification confronts Britain and India, particularly, with grave decisions about their over-all policy in Asia and is expected to bring about great heart-searching at the Commonwealth conference which opened in London on January 4. Meanwhile, the UN Assembly's Truce Committee, composed of Sir Benegal N. Rau of India, Lester B. Pearson of Canada and Nassrollah Entezam of Iran, reported on January 3 to the Political Committee at Lake Success that China had rejected a cease-fire, demanding, as the price of peace in Korea, withdrawal of United States and other "foreign troops," removal of the Seventh Fleet from Formosan waters and admission of Peiping to the United Nations. The Truce Committee, however, is weighing another appeal to Peiping for acceptance of a "package" proposal—first suggested by Moshe Sharett, foreign minister of Israel—which would consist of several stages, beginning with an immediate cease-fire and ending with a general big-power conference on the Far East.

These various suggestions about negotiations in Europe and Asia, in turn, confront the Administration with a series of

difficult questions. Should the United States negotiate with Russia and China? Or would the President and Secretary of State Dean Acheson, if they negotiate, be subjected to attack by the Republicans on the ground of being "soft to communism"? President Truman said on January 8: "We are willing, as we have always been, to negotiate honorable settlements with the Soviet Union. But we will not engage in appeasement." What would the United States regard as "honorable settlements"? What issues could or should be discussed at new conferences? Will the eventual result of such conferences be the acceptance by all sides of a new balance of power—a concept hitherto regarded with repugnance by the American public?

At the beginning of the new year, commentators were sharply divided on these questions. Walter Lippmann urged the United States not to let Russia win the diplomatic battle by default. Anne O'Hare McCormick contended that "only the hope of peace will recruit powerful armies today," and that no matter how pessimistic one may be about negotiations, "it is necessary above all to convince people that every other effort to make peace has been tried and tried again." And Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., after attacking *The Nation* for its special issue, "Peace with Russia: Can it be Negotiated?" in the *New York Post* of December 23, then deplored on December 30 and January 6 the lack in the State Department of experts familiar with Russia and indicated that the way to negotiations must be kept open. In the race between military preparations to avert war and diplomatic, economic and social measures to build peace, the winning formula remained as yet undetermined.

VERA MICHELES DEAN

Point Four Gets Off to Successful Start

The thunder of jets over Korea, the rumblings of military mobilization in Europe and the vigor of foreign policy debates in Washington have drowned out the news that this country is making very real progress in implementing its Point Four program.

First mentioned in Mr. Truman's inaugural address on January 20, 1949, Point Four became law on June 5, 1950 when the President signed a bill entitled "An Act for International Development." This statute empowered the President to proceed with the technical assistance phase of the plan for raising the level of indus-

trialization in the underdeveloped areas. It is expected that the Administration will request the 82nd Congress to pass legislation permitting the government to encourage the flow of private capital abroad by tax concessions and guarantees against losses on foreign investment arising from expropriation or currency inconvertibility.

Point Four Fund

Although the State Department had hoped to have \$45 million to finance the first year of the program, it was not unduly disappointed with the \$34.5 million granted by the Appropriations Act signed

September 6, 1950. Of this total, \$2.6 million appropriated for International Information and Educational Activities will be utilized to finance technical assistance projects already under way, while \$5 million will be turned over to the Institute of Inter-American Affairs to carry out its activities frequently referred to as a "preview of Point Four." This leaves new money of \$26.9 million, from which amount must come this country's \$12,007,500 contribution to the United Nations \$20-million program of technical assistance. After several other minor deductions are made, about \$10 million will be left out of this

year's appropriations to be apportioned among participating countries for new projects.

Almost from the first, the Point Four program was forced to labor under the severe handicap of public misunderstanding. The concept was originally presented in such glowing terms that it was easy to overlook the fact that it was essentially a long-term policy of guided self-help. In the underdeveloped areas Point Four was considered to be a sort of super give-away or "hit-the-jackpot" affair. When the meaning of technical assistance did percolate down to the expected participants, their first reaction was one of dismay. Prime Minister Nehru of India considered the program of "no great value," and M. A. H. Ispahani, Pakistani ambassador to the United States, termed it financially inadequate.

Progress to Date

While the United Nations program of technical assistance is making slow but steady progress, the United States has proceeded to make a number of bilateral agreements designed to implement Point Four. These negotiations have led to a clearer understanding of the plan as well as to a friendlier attitude on the part of prospective recipients.

The first comprehensive and integrated project under the program was agreed upon by the United States and Iran on October 19 and involved an allocation of \$500,000 to help improve conditions in rural Iran. Under the project villagers will be taught elementary sanitation, agricultural and vocational techniques in centrally located demonstration centers. It is hoped that this mass education will, for example, reduce the number, about 4 million, who fall victim to malaria every year.

During the last week in October the

Council of Ministers of the Egyptian government approved that country's participation in the Point Four program and directed its foreign minister to discuss details of a specific agreement with State Department officials. The Egyptian government had the matter under advisement for several months and agreed to participate only when convinced that there were no political strings tied to the program.

On November 7 a general, or "umbrella," agreement was signed with Ceylon. Unlike the Iranian arrangement, it does not involve a grant of funds. Rather, the arrangement specified certain lines of technical cooperation, including specific projects, as well as a statement of the conditions that must be met in order to qualify that island to receive Point Four funds.

On December 2 the United States and Paraguay announced the formation of a joint commission for economic development. This body will survey the needs of the Paraguayan economy and make recommendations as to the specific projects which should be financed with a Point Four allocation.

On November 18, Oscar Meier, chief of the United States economic mission to Liberia, said that the progress made in that small, independent African republic was "a striking illustration of what can be done with technical assistance toward the development of economic and human resources." The allocation to that country was \$850,000 to finance the activities of 67 American technicians working in the fields of health, agriculture, power, transport and public administration.

During the week of December 18 Point Four pacts were signed with Haiti and Brazil. The latter document is especially interesting because it includes an "umbrella" agreement, similar to the one used

in Ceylon, plus the establishment of a joint committee for economic assistance along the lines of the Paraguayan agreement.

On December 28 the State Department announced that a Point Four compact had been signed with India. An allotment of \$1.2 million will be provided to begin work on five specific developmental projects. While this will not meet India's present emergency need for 2 million tons of grain, it can do much to assure that a similar situation does not occur in future years.

In each case the recipient nations are providing approximately the dollar equivalent of the Point Four monies in goods and services to be utilized in connection with local projects. It is estimated, for example, that the Iranian contribution of experts, equipment, buildings and land involves a local outlay valued at \$4 for every American dollar provided. It is therefore clear that this country, which, beginning with its contribution to UNRRA, has advanced nearly \$30 billion in foreign loans, grants and other forms of aid, has not embarked in Point Four on a program of major financial commitments.

According to Washington, there were, as of mid-December, 350 American technicians already at work in 36 foreign countries. These men and women are giving the lie to the Communist charge that this nation conducts its international economic relations on a predatory or imperialistic basis.

As the United States girds itself for a possible showdown with the Soviet Union, it is important to realize that the experts who bring the benefits of our scientific and industrial progress to remote portions of the world are valuable soldiers serving on the front lines of a constructive battle for a free world.

HOWARD C. GARY

Morale Crucial to French Defense Effort

Immediately upon his arrival in Paris on January 7 to assume the leadership of Western defense, General Dwight D. Eisenhower began consultations with French political and military leaders. Whatever plans he is able to develop, it is clear that the French will have to play a basic role, for today the defense of Western Europe—before any decision on Germany has been implemented—means primarily the defense of France.

France's determination to strengthen its defenses was demonstrated by the Na-

tional Assembly's decision on December 29 to authorize \$2.1 billion for rearmament. Thereby, France sought to prove its solidarity with the West and its willingness to sacrifice. Nevertheless, there are serious weaknesses—military, economic, political and psychological—in the French position.

French Limitations

The French now have five divisions at home and over 200,000 troops, including colonials, in Africa and Germany, plus the

forces in Indo-China—150,000 men, including 63,000 from metropolitan France. Present plans call for a build-up to 10 divisions in 1951, 20 divisions by 1953. Yet as many as 50 divisions would be needed for an adequate defense of the French frontiers. In 1940 almost 100 divisions proved inadequate. It is doubtful if even the French system of rapid mobilization of reservists when war starts could provide a large enough army. The extent of French mobilization is sharply limited by the population, which, although it

totals 42 million, includes only 5 million men between 20 and 39 years of age. Any extensive drain on this manpower, along with efforts to expand armament manufacture, would have serious economic repercussions.

Despite increasing production, the average French worker lives on a shockingly low real income and is acutely bitter about inequities in the distribution of wealth. Since conscripts get little remuneration and a heavy arms program would spur present inflationary tendencies, discontent both within the army and among the civilian population would increase more rapidly than the size of the military effort.

These harsh economic realities intensify the problems of a politically insecure regime. The Communists—strongest opponents of rearmament—hold about one-fourth of the seats in the Assembly and play a dominant role among the industrial workers, who would be hardest hit by large-scale rearmament. The weakness of the coalition “third force” government—which under the constitution must submit to a test at the polls by November—was revealed by the November 28 motion censuring Jules Moch, Socialist defense minister, which almost upset the cabinet.

It is in the psychological sphere that the French crisis is most acute. A basic distrust, deeply rooted in history, characterizes the outlook of every group in France—workers, civil servants, the middle class, the Church and the army—making them question the value of supporting their government or the Western cause. Perhaps the most widespread doubts have been produced by the character of the alliance with the United States, especially in view of recent developments here.

Doubts About America

There is, in the first place, a deep-seated aversion to the American way of life—as seen by the French it is crudely materialistic, “capitalistic,” culturally shallow, perhaps only slightly less repugnant than the Russian way. This antipathy is deepened by the profound humiliation resulting from France’s wartime defeats, which have forced a proud people who think of themselves as the leaders of Europe and of Western civilization to accept

a subordinate role. Apathy and nihilism, a frantic attempt to retain dependent territories as a symbol of imperial greatness, the quest for a neutral role in world politics—these are but some of the consequences of current sentiments, all involving a clash with American views and objectives.

French confidence in the United States has been further shaken by recent American decisions on Spain and by pressure for speedy arming of the West Germans. The traditional anxiety lest a German army march across the Rhine has dwindled in the face of new misgivings. The French consider it axiomatic that an autonomous Reichswehr, composed of nationalist officers and drawing heavily on the expelled population, would seek German unity at all costs, even by starting a disastrous war in the East. The average Frenchman, moreover, shows no enthusiasm about jeopardizing his life to defend Western Europe if it means fighting in Germany by the side of former Nazis. The French also fear that German rearmament would revive the power of Ruhr industrialists and pave the way for assertion of German hegemony over France.

But French confidence that defense is possible has also been undermined by the present foreign policy debate in the United States. President Truman’s still unimplemented promise of September 9 that American reinforcements would go to Europe and the appointment of General Eisenhower have been counteracted by former President Hoover’s proposal to withdraw completely from continental Europe and by Senator Robert Taft’s suggestions on January 5 for sharp limitations on American aid. Worry lest the United States become more deeply committed in the Far East, particularly in a war with Communist China, also makes the French wonder if we would have resources enough left over to give them substantial help. Meanwhile, other Frenchmen fear that undue dependence on the United States will lead to unpopularity and instability of the French government at home and declining influence abroad.

Two possible remedies for the present critical situation have been proposed, either of which might help restore French self-confidence and morale. The first in-

volves an organic, binding union with other Western countries. Ideally this means full federation with Britain, West Germany and other European countries in line with the Schuman and Pleven plans. Only such a union, the French think, would guarantee a cause worth fighting for and would offer hope that the Germans could be kept in the role of partners rather than of masters. The unwillingness of Britain, with its imperial and Commonwealth commitments, to go along with such a scheme has raised the question of a tripartite Atlantic union composed of North America, the Commonwealth and Western Europe. But Washington, anxious for quick results, is pressing for immediate rearmament before discussing long-range unification schemes.

If an Atlantic or European union cannot be organized, many Frenchmen would prefer to try a different approach based on negotiation with the Russians regarding Germany, in the hopes that France might move toward a more independent, neutral status, relying not on defensive strength but on noninvolvement in the struggle between the superpowers.

FRED W. RIGGS

(The second article of a series on Western defense.)

Branch and Affiliate Meetings

- DETROIT, January 16, *Frontiers of U.S. Foreign Policy*, Brooks Emeny
- PROVIDENCE, January 16, Special Meeting for Fund Raising, “Who Said That?”
- CINCINNATI, January 17, *General World Situation*, Paul Henri Spaak
- NEW YORK, January 18, *France and Today’s Crisis*, Georges-Henri Martin
- PROVIDENCE, January 18, *Will France Fight For Liberty?*, Roger Asselineau, Donald McKay
- PHILADELPHIA, January 20, Career Conference for High School Students
- NEW YORK, January 22, *France and Today’s Crisis*, Georges-Henri Martin
- PITTSBURGH, January 22, *U.S. Relations With Latin America*, Edward G. Miller, Jr.
- COLUMBUS, January 24, *Southeast Asia*, John Cady
- CLEVELAND, January 26, 27, World Affairs Institute

The British Settlement of Natal, A Study in Imperial Migration, by Alan F. Hattersley. Cambridge, England, Cambridge University Press, 1950. \$3.75.

A detailed account of the emigration from England to Natal between 1848 and 1851, showing the forces which induced Englishmen to leave their old homes and the manner in which they settled, written by a Professor of History in the University of Natal.